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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/680,993	10/08/2003	Hideto Nakamura	FP03-019US	6470
1218	7590	05/25/2004	EXAMINER DINH, PHUONG K	
CASELLA & HESPOS 274 MADISON AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10016			ART UNIT 2839	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 05/25/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/680,993	NAKAMURA, HIDETO	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Phuong KT Dinh	2839	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 October 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 3-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2 and 10 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>0304</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Abstract

1. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because:
2. Abstract, line 7, the phrase, "can be fixed as not to be movable" should be changed to - - can be fixed so as to be movable - -.
3. Abstract, lines 7-8, the phrase, "a prevention" should be changed to - - a release prevention - -.
4. Abstract, line 8, the phrase, "a permission" should be changed to - - a lock release permission - -.
5. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. Claims 1, 3 and 8-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Klein (U. S. Patent 4,870,840).

Regarding claims 1 and 8, Klein (see figures 1-3 and 6) discloses a connector comprising: a housing 1 connectable with a mating housing 2; at least one locking means 8 on the housing for locking the two housings 1, 2 together; a slider 6 on the housing and movable substantially along a connecting direction of the housings

between a prevention area where cancellation of the locked state by the locking means is prevented and a permission area where cancellation of the locked state by the locking means 8 is permitted; and fixing means 4 (see figures 3 and 6) between the housing and the slider for fixing the slider in the prevention area.

Regarding claim 3, Klein (see figures 1-3, 6) discloses the locking means 8 include a lock arm on the housing for engaging a lock of the mating housing when a substantially properly connected state is reached.

Regarding claim 9, Klein (see figures 1-3 and 8) discloses at least one fixing means 4 is provided between at least one of the two housings 1, 2 and the slider 6 for fixing the slider in such a manner as not to be movable from the prevention area toward the permission area.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 3-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Koseki (U. S. Patent 6,450,830) in view of Wilber (U. S. Patent 6, 234, 826).

Regarding claims 1 and 8-9, Koseki (see figures 4 and 5) discloses a connector comprising: a housing connectable with a mating housing; at least one locking means 6 on the housing for locking the two housings together; a slider 4 on the housing and movable substantially along a connecting direction of the housings between a

prevention area where cancellation of the locked state by the locking means 6 is prevented and a permission area where cancellation of the locked state by the locking means is permitted. Koseki discloses the claimed invention except for a fixing means between the housing and the slider for fixing the slider in the prevention area. Wilber discloses legs 24 are fixing means since they require use of a tool for release column 7. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Koseki to provide the fixing means as taught by Wilber so as to insure that the slider stays in position.

Regarding claim 3, Koseki (see figures 4 and 5) discloses the locking means 6 include a lock arm on the housing for engaging a lock of the mating housing when a substantially properly connected state is reached.

Regarding claim 4, Koseki (see figures 4 and 5) discloses an unlocking portion (end of latch 8) is provided on at least one of the slider 4 and the lock arm for disengaging the lock arm from the lock as the slider is moved from the prevention area toward the permission area.

Regarding claim 5, Koseki (see figures 4 and 5) discloses the lock arm (end of latch 8) is displaceable while moving onto the lock during connection of the housings.

Regarding claim 6, Koseki (see figures 4 and 5) discloses the slider 4 comprises a protecting portion 7 capable of at least partly covering a rear end of the locking means when the slider is in the preventing area.

Regarding claim 7, Koseki (see figures 4 and 5) discloses the protecting portion 7 is dimensioned for at least partly covering the unlocking portion.

Allowable Subject Matter

9. Claims 2 and 10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

None of the references discloses the slider and includes holes substantially alignable with each other with the first and second connector housings connected with each other and the slider located in the prevention area and a fixing member insertable through the holes to immovably fix the slider.

Conclusion

Any response to this action may be mailed to:

Commissioner for Patents

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

For additional information regarding this new address, which was effective May 1, 2003, see *Correspondence with the United States Patent and Trademark Office*, 68 Fed. Reg. 14332 (March 25, 2003).

Or Faxed to:

(703) 872-9306.

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to:

Crystal Plaza 4, Fourth Floor (Receptionist)

2201 South Clark Place, Arlington, Virginia.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phuong KT Dinh whose telephone number is 571-272-2090. The examiner can normally be reached on 8 -5, 5 days a week.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynn Field can be reached on 571-272-2092. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 2839

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phuong Dinh', is written over a horizontal line.

Phuong Dinh
March 31, 2004.